

Remarks

Reconsideration of this Application is respectfully requested.

Upon entry of the foregoing amendment, claims 10 - 18 are pending in the application, with claim 10 being the independent claim. Claims 10-16 are presently amended. These changes are believed to introduce no new matter, and their entry is respectfully requested.

Based on the above amendment and the following remarks, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider all outstanding objections and rejections and that they be withdrawn.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102

The Examiner has rejected claim 10 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2005/0091056 to Surace *et al.* ("Surace"). The Examiner has further rejected claims 10, 11, and 13 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,885,736 to Uppaluru ("Uppaluru"). Based on the following remarks, Applicants respectfully traverse.

Anticipation of Claim 10 by Surace

Independent claim 10, as presently amended, recites a method of providing a voice user interface for a user. The method includes:

- enabling the user to specify character traits for a virtual host;
- storing the specified character traits in a user profile having preference information for the user; and
- generating a virtual host with a consistent personality in accordance with the specified character traits.

Surace does not teach or suggest each of the foregoing features of independent claim 10. For example, Surace does not teach or suggest "enabling the user to specify character traits for a virtual host; storing the specified character traits in a user profile having preference information for the user; and generating a virtual host with a consistent personality in accordance with the specified character traits" as recited in claim 10.

As noted in the Amendment and Reply Under 37 C.F.R. § 1.116 filed on February 1, 2006, the specification of the present application discloses that "a user is able to indicate in his or her profile specific character traits such as tone 321, sex 322, accent 323, formality 324, speed 325, character 326, and background 327 to develop a personality for the VUI host." (Published Specification, paragraph [0195]). Surace, on the other hand, describes developing a personality for a voice user interface as follows:

In particular, those skilled in the art of, for example, social psychology review the application requirements, and *they then determine which personality types best serve the delivery of a voice user interface* for the functions or services included in the application requirements. A personality or multiple personalities are selected, and a complete description is created of a stereotypical person displaying the selected personality or personalities, such as age, gender, education, employment history, and current employment position. Scenarios are developed for verbal interaction between the stereotypical person and typical users. (Surace at paragraph [0043], emphasis added).

In one embodiment, application 902 allows the subscriber to select a virtual assistant and, thus, a voice user interface with a particular personality that uses a particular prompt suite. (Surace at paragraph [102]).

In one embodiment, the subscriber selects from several different personalities when selecting a virtual assistant. For example, the subscriber can interview virtual assistants with different personalities in order to choose the voice user interface with a

personality that is best suited for the subscriber's needs, business, or the subscriber's own personality. (Surace at paragraph [0113]).

As further noted in the Amendment and Reply Under 37 C.F.R. § 1.116 filed on February 1, 2006, Surace discloses that persons of skill in the art of social psychology, as opposed to the user of the voice user interface, specify the character traits for creating virtual hosts with different personalities. Surace's method is therefore different from the method of claim 10, which enables the user of the voice user interface to specify and save character traits for a virtual host in a user profile, from which a personality for the virtual host is generated.

The Examiner has responded to this argument by stating:

The arguments appear to suggest enabling a user to save character traits for a virtual host in a user profile. However, the claims only recite storing character traits in a user profile. (Office Action of April 19, 2006, page 2).

Though Applicants believe that the previous statements are sufficient to overcome the rejection of claim 10 in view of Surace, claim 10 has nevertheless been amended to more clearly indicate that the character traits for the virtual host as specified by a user are the character traits that are stored in a user profile. Accordingly, the amendment should not be construed as to narrow the claimed subject matter. Surace nowhere teaches or suggests the storage of character traits as specified by a user, instead providing that a user may select "a voice user interface with a particular personality" (Surace at paragraph [0113]) but not the character traits that define the particular personality. Instead, in Surace, character traits that define the particular personality are specified by persons of skill in the art of social psychology rather than the user, as noted above.

Since Surace fails to teach or suggest each and every feature of independent claim 10, Surace fails to anticipate claim 10. Accordingly, the Examiner's rejection of claim 10 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Surace is traversed and Applicants respectfully request that the rejection be reconsidered and withdrawn.

Anticipation of Claims 10, 11, and 13 by Uppaluru

Uppaluru also does not teach or suggest each of the features of independent claim 10 as presently amended. For example, Uppaluru does not teach or suggest "enabling the user to specify character traits for a virtual host; storing the specified character traits in a user profile having preference information for the user; and generating a virtual host with a consistent personality in accordance with the specified character traits" as recited in claim 10.

Uppaluru is directed to "a set of web pages containing information (components) formatted using MIME and hypertext markup language (HTML) standards with extensions for voice information access and navigation." (Uppaluru, col. 2, ll. 43-46). Uppaluru further includes a "personal profile ... designed for component access within web pages allowing easy extraction of context sensitive profile information." (Uppaluru, col. 3, ll. 3-5). A voice web system as taught in Uppaluru is operable to retrieve control key word sets from the personal profile in order to facilitate navigation and accessing of information from the voice web using voice commands. (Uppaluru, col. 3, ll. 36-41).

In Uppaluru, therefore, user profile information provided by the user and stored in the user profile databases is designed for the purpose of speech recognition. In contrast, as recited in claim 10, character traits specified by a user for a virtual host are used to "generate a virtual host with a consistent personality in accordance with the

specified character traits." The information in the personal profile disclosed in Uppaluru cannot be used to produce a personality consistent with the information.

The Examiner refers to Uppaluru at col. 17, line 61 through col. 18, line 44 in order to contend that Uppaluru teaches generating a virtual host with a consistent personality. However, the aforementioned sections are directed to delivering a "selected service," for which a "service agent" is operable to "use the speech training page associated with the selected service to recognize voice commands submitted 720 by the subscriber." (Uppaluru, col. 18, ll. 31 - 34). Therefore, if one interprets Uppaluru in a manner consistent with the Examiner's interpretation, then any character traits used in Uppaluru are for the purpose of speech recognition training only.

In contrast, the present invention uses character traits not for speech recognition, but instead to generate the personality of the virtual host as disclosed in the present invention. Though Applicants do not concede that Uppaluru discloses specifying character traits (and, accordingly, storing character traits), the voice sample equated by the Examiner to a character trait (Office Action, p. 3) does not form the basis for "generating a virtual host with a consistent personality in accordance with the specified character traits" as recited in claim 10.

Because Uppaluru does not teach or suggest "generating a virtual host with a consistent personality in accordance with the character traits," it does not anticipate claim 10. Accordingly, the Examiner's rejection of claim 10 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) is traversed and Applicants respectfully request that the rejection be withdrawn.

Dependent claims 11 and 13 are not anticipated by Uppaluru for at least the same reasons as independent claim 10 from which they depend, and further in view of their

own respective features. Accordingly, the Examiner's rejection of claims 11 and 13 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) is traversed and Applicants respectfully request that the rejection be withdrawn.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103

The Examiner has rejected claims 11 - 18 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a). The individual grounds of rejection are as follows:

- the Examiner has rejected claim 11 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over Surace in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,301,339 to Staples *et al.* ("Staples");
- the Examiner has rejected claim 12 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over Surace in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,189,702 to Sakurai *et al.* ("Sakurai");
- the Examiner has rejected claim 13 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over Surace in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,768,508 to Eikeland ("Eikeland");
- the Examiner has rejected claim 14 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over Surace in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,911,043 to Duffy *et al.* ("Duffy");
- the Examiner has rejected claim 15 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over Surace in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,366,882 to Bijl *et al.* ("Bijl"); and
- the Examiner has rejected claims 16-18 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over Surace in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,531,184 to Wigan *et al.* ("Wigan").

As described above, Surace does not teach or suggest all of the features of independent claim 10, as amended. Furthermore, Staples, Sakurai, Eikeland, Duffy, Bijl, and Wigan do not supply the missing teachings. At a minimum, any combination of Surace with Staples, Sakurai, Eikeland, Duffy, Bijl, or Wigan fails to teach or suggest "enabling the user to specify character traits for a virtual host; storing the specified

character traits in a user profile having preference information for the user; and generating a virtual host with a consistent personality in accordance with the specified character traits," as recited in claim 10.

Since Surace, Staples, Sakurai, Eikeland, Duffy, Bijl, and Wigan do not teach or suggest all of the features of independent claim 10, either alone or in combination, the combination fails to support a *prima facie* case of obviousness of that claim. Dependent claims 11 - 18 are therefore not rendered obvious by Surace, Staples, Sakurai, Eikeland, Duffy, Bijl, and Wigan for at least the same reasons as independent claim 10 from which they depend, and further in view of their own respective features. Accordingly, the Examiner's rejection of claims 11 - 18 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) is traversed and Applicants respectfully request that the rejection be withdrawn.

The Examiner has further rejected claims 12 and 14 - 16 under the following individual grounds of rejection:

- the Examiner has rejected claim 12 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over Uppaluru in view of Sakurai;
- the Examiner has rejected claim 14 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over Uppaluru in view of Duffy;
- the Examiner has rejected claim 15 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over Uppaluru in view of Bijl; and
- the Examiner has rejected claim 16 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over Uppaluru in view of Wigan.

As described above, Uppaluru does not teach or suggest all of the features of independent claim 10, as amended. Furthermore, Sakurai, Duffy, Bijl, and Wigan do not supply the missing teachings. At a minimum, any combination of Uppaluru with Sakurai, Duffy, Bijl, or Wigan fails to teach or suggest "enabling the user to specify

character traits for a virtual host; storing the specified character traits in a user profile having preference information for the user; and generating a virtual host with a consistent personality in accordance with the specified character traits," as recited in claim 10.

Since Uppaluru, Sakurai, Duffy, Bijl, and Wigan do not teach or suggest all of the features of independent claim 10, either alone or in combination, the combination fails to support a *prima facie* case of obviousness of that claim. Dependent claims 12 and 14 - 16 are therefore not rendered obvious by Uppaluru, Sakurai, Duffy, Bijl, and Wigan for at least the same reasons as independent claim 10 from which they depend, and further in view of their own respective features. Accordingly, the Examiner's rejection of claims 12 and 14 - 16 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) is traversed and Applicants respectfully request that the rejection be withdrawn.

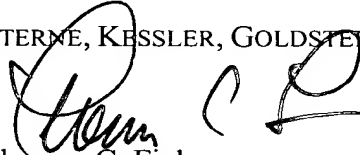
Conclusion

All of the stated grounds of objection and rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicants therefore respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider all presently outstanding objections and rejections and that they be withdrawn. Applicants believe that a full and complete reply has been made to the outstanding Office Action and, as such, the present application is in condition for allowance. If the Examiner believes, for any reason, that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number provided.

Prompt and favorable consideration of this Amendment and Reply is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

STERNE, KESSLER, GOLDSTEIN & FOX P.L.L.C.



Thomas C. Fiala
Attorney for Applicants
Registration No. 43,610

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1100 New York Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20005-3934
(202) 371-2600
526903